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12 **UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT**
13 **DISTRICT OF NEVADA**

14 In re:

15 USA Commercial Mortgage Company,

16 Debtor.

17 Case No. BK-S-06-10725-LBR

18 Chapter 11

19 **FIRST OMNIBUS OBJECTION OF**
20 **USACM TRUST TO PROOFS OF**
21 **CLAIM BASED ENTIRELY UPON**
22 **INVESTMENT IN THE PALM**
23 **HARBOR ONE LOAN**

24 Hearing Date: August 30, 2011

25 Hearing Time: 10:30 a.m.

26 Estimated Time for Hearing: 10 minutes

27 The USACM Liquidating Trust (the “USACM Trust”) moves this Court, pursuant
28 to § 502 of title 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Code (the “Bankruptcy Code”) and
29 Rule 3007 of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure (the “Bankruptcy Rules”), for an
30 order disallowing the Proofs of Claim listed in **Exhibit A**. These claims were filed by
31 investors (“Direct Lenders”) against USA Commercial Mortgage Company (“USACM”)
32 based upon an investment in a loan (the “Palm Harbor Loan”) to Palm Harbor One, LLC
33 (the “Borrower”). This Objection is supported by the Court’s record and the Declarations
34 of Geoffrey L. Berman and Edward M. Burr in Support of Omnibus Objections to Proofs
35 of Claim Based Upon the Investment in the Palm Harbor Loan. (the “Berman Decl.” and
36 “Burr Decl.”).

1 THIS OBJECTION DOES NOT RELATE TO AND WILL NOT IMPACT THE
2 DIRECT LENDERS' RIGHTS TO REPAYMENT ON THE PALM HARBOR LOAN,
3 SHARE IN ANY PROCEEDS GENERATED FROM THE SALE OF THE REAL
4 PROPERTY SECURING THE PALM HARBOR LOAN, OR SHARE IN THE
5 RECOVERY OF ANY FUNDS FROM THE GUARANTOR FOR THE LOAN.

6 **MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES**

7 **I. BACKGROUND FACTS**

8 **a. The USACM Bankruptcy**

9 On April 13, 2006 ("Petition Date"), USACM filed a voluntary petition for relief
10 under chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code. Debtor continued to operate its business as
11 debtor-in-possession pursuant to sections 1107(a) and 1108 of the Bankruptcy Code.
12 Debtor's post-petition management of the Debtor was under the direction of Thomas J.
13 Allison of Mesirow Financial Interim Management, LLC, who served as the Chief
14 Restructuring Officer.

15 USACM was a Nevada corporation that, prior to the Petition Date, was in the
16 business of underwriting, originating, brokering, funding and servicing commercial loans
17 primarily secured by real estate, both on behalf of investors and for its own account. That
18 business included the solicitation of investors to purchase fractional interest in loans that
19 USACM originated and then serviced. These investors are referred to as "Direct Lenders"
20 in USACM's bankruptcy case and in this Objection.

21 On January 8, 2007, this Court entered its Order Confirming the "Debtors' Third
22 Amended Joint Chapter 11 Plan of Reorganization" as Modified Herein [Docket No.
23 2376]. As part of the Plan, and pursuant to an Asset Purchase Agreement filed with this
24 Court, USACM sold the servicing rights to most of the loans it serviced to Compass
25 Partners, LLC and Compass Financial Partners, LLC ("Compass"), including the Palm
26 Harbor Loan. The sale to Compass closed on February 16, 2007.

1 The USACM Trust exists as of the Effective Date of the Plan, which was March 12,
2 2007. Geoffrey L. Berman is the Trustee. Under the Plan, the USACM Trust is the
3 successor to USACM with respect to standing to seek allowance and disallowance of
4 Claims under 11 U.S.C. § 502(a).

5 Upon information derived from filings in the United States District Court, District
6 of Nevada, *3685 San Fernando Lenders Company, LLC, et al v. Compass USA SPE, LLC,*
7 *et al*, No. 2:07-cv-00892-RCJ-GWF action, the Trust believes that “Silar Advisors, LP
8 (“Silar”) financed Compass’ acquisition of the Purchased Assets, including the loan
9 service agreements in the USACM bankruptcy case and took a secured interest in those
10 Purchased Assets by executing a Master Repurchase Agreement (“Repurchase
11 Agreement”) with Compass, and by filing a UCC-1 financing statement with the State of
12 Delaware.” *Id.* Docket 1250 at 13-14 (citations to declarations omitted).

13 Further, from filings in the same action, the Trust believes that “Effective as of
14 September 26, 2007, Silar foreclosed on Compass through Asset Resolution LLC (“Asset
15 Resolution”) and took ownership of the Purchased Assets. ... Silar created Asset
16 Resolution as a ‘single purpose entity,’ conveyed all of its interests in the Repurchase
17 Agreement to Asset Resolution, and Asset Resolution properly foreclosed on the assets of
18 Compass, including the Purchased Assets.” (Citations omitted.) Asset Resolution LLC is
19 now a debtor in a chapter 7 bankruptcy case pending in Nevada, case no. BK-S-09-32824-
20 RCJ, along with certain affiliates.¹

21 The Trust has attempted to monitor loan collections through monitoring the district
22 court litigation and the ARC bankruptcy case, but has received limited information
23 concerning servicing and resolution of direct loans by Compass/Silar/Asset Resolution or

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25 ¹ 10 90 SPE LLC, Fiesta Stoneridge LLC, CFP Gramercy SPE LLC, Bundy 2.5 Million SPE LLC, CFP
26 Cornman Toltec SPE LLC, Bundy Five Million LLC, Fox Hills SPE LLC, HFAH Monaco SPE LLC,
Huntsville SPE LLC, Lake Helen Partners SPE LLC, Ocean Atlantic SPE LLC, CFP, Gess SPE LLC, CFP
Palm Harbor SPE LLC, and Shamrock SPE LLC.

1 their successors, including the trustee in bankruptcy for Asset Resolution. The Trust has
2 learned that an entity by the name of CCM Pathfinder Palm Harbor Management LLC
3 (“Pathfinder”) is now the asset manager and loan servicer for the Palm Harbor Loan
4 pursuant to an order entered on June 10, 2010 by the Hon. Robert C. Jones in the United
5 States Bankruptcy Court (Case No. BK-S-09-32824-RCJ). The Trust’s counsel has
6 received information from Pathfinder about the Palm Harbor Loan.²

7 **b. The Palm Harbor Loan**

8 USACM circulated an Offer Sheet to prospective Direct Lenders soliciting funding
9 for an acquisition and development loan to a borrower identified as “Palm Harbor One,
10 LLC.” A copy of the Offer Sheet is attached hereto as **Exhibit B** and incorporated by this
11 reference. (Berman Decl., ¶ 4.) The total loan amount proposed was \$29,000,000. The
12 Offer Sheet described the investment as a “First Trust Deed Investment” and noted that the
13 investment would be secured by a first deed of trust on “approximately 20 acres with two
14 adjacent apartment complexes with a total of 432 units in Palm Harbor, Florida.” The loan
15 to value ratio was 73% based on an October 17, 2005 appraisal from Hendry Real Estate
16 Advisors. (Berman Decl., ¶ 4.)

17 Pursuant to the Offer Sheet, the loan was intended for Borrower to purchase the
18 apartment complexes and convert them into condominium units. (Berman Decl., ¶ 4.)

19 On November 28, 2005, Borrower made and delivered to various lenders, including
20 the Direct Lenders identified in **Exhibit A**, a “Promissory Note Secured by Deed of Trust”
21 (the “Note”) and a Loan Agreement. (Berman Decl., ¶ 5.) The Note and Loan Agreement
22 provided for a loan of \$29,000,000, with an initial loan in the amount of \$26,200,000. The
23 Note was secured by a “Mortgage, Security Agreement and Assignment of Rents” from
24 the Borrower in favor of the Direct Lenders that was recorded in the official records of
25 Pinellas County, Florida on December 16, 2005 at Instrument Number 2005502422, as

26 ² The Order originally named CCM Pathfinder Pompano Bay, LLC as the asset manager and receiver.

were subsequent amendments to the Deed of Trust to secure subsequent advances and add additional beneficiaries. The Note was also supported by an Unconditional Guaranty signed by Joseph Lilly, who, pursuant to the Offer Sheet, had a “reported net worth of approximately \$8,000,000 as of August 15, 2005.” (Berman Decl., ¶ 7)

The USACM “Loan Summary” dated February 28, 2007 and filed in this case shows that Borrower was “Performing” on the Note as of February 28, 2007. (Berman Decl., ¶ 7.) During this bankruptcy case through the transfer of servicing to Compass, USACM treated the Direct Lenders with respect to any interim payments by the borrower in accordance with this Court’s orders and the confirmed Plan.

Counsel for the Trustee followed up with Pathfinder regarding the Palm Harbor Loan, and Pathfinder provided the Trustee with a copy of its March 31, 2011 update on the status of the Palm Harbor Loan. Pursuant to that update, the Borrower filed for bankruptcy in Massachusetts in summer 2007. In March 2008, Compass entered into a settlement agreement with the Borrower and the Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors pursuant to which, Compass was granted relief from the automatic stay to foreclose on the collateral and the Committee would receive no less than \$300,000 from the proceeds from the sale of the collateral. Ultimately, Pathfinder agreed to pay the Committee \$150,000 in exchange for their support for the implementation of a U.S.C. § 363 sale of the collateral, which funds would count toward the payment owing under the settlement agreement with the Committee. The Massachusetts bankruptcy court has approved the 363 sale, and Pathfinder plans to enter a credit bid on behalf of the Direct Lenders. Pursuant to the update, some of the condominium units subject to the Mortgage were conveyed by the Borrower without payment to USACM or Compass and without a corresponding release of the Mortgage. Thus, Pathfinder is also pursuing foreclosure in Florida on those units and is contemplating an action against the title company.

1 **c. The Palm Harbor Claims**

2 **Exhibit A**, attached, lists Proofs of Claim filed by Direct Lenders that appear to be
3 based entirely upon an investment in the Palm Harbor Loan. (Burr Decl. ¶ 7.) **Exhibit A**
4 identifies the Proof of Claim number, the claimant, the claimant's address, the total
5 amount of the claim and the total amount of the claim that appears to be related to an
6 investment in the Palm Harbor Loan based upon the information provided by the
7 claimant. (Burr Declaration ¶ 7.) The claims listed in **Exhibit A** are referred to
8 hereafter as the "Palm Harbor Claims." As required by Nevada LR 3007, a copy of the
9 first page of the proof of claim for each of the claims referenced in **Exhibit A** are attached
10 as **Exhibit C**.

11 **II. JURISDICTION**

12 The Court has jurisdiction over this Objection pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1334 and
13 157. Venue is appropriate under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409. This matter is a core
14 proceeding under 28 U.S.C. § 502 and Bankruptcy Rule 3007.

15 The statutory predicates for the relief requested herein are 11 U.S.C. § 502 and
16 Bankruptcy Rule 3007.

17 **III. APPLICABLE AUTHORITY**

18 Under the Bankruptcy Code, any Claim for which a proof of claim has been filed
19 will be allowed unless a party in interest objects. If a party in interest objects to the proof
20 of claim, the Court, after notice and hearing, shall determine the amount of the Claim and
21 shall allow the Claim except to the extent that the Claim is "unenforceable against the
22 debtor . . . under any . . . applicable law for a reason other than because such claim is
23 contingent or unmatured." 11 U.S.C. § 502(b). A properly filed proof of claim is
24 presumed valid under Bankruptcy Rule 3001(f). However, once an objection to the proof
25 of claim controverts the presumption, the creditor ultimately bears the burden of
26 persuasion as to the validity and amount of the claim. *See Ashford v. Consolidated*

1 *Pioneer Mortg. (In re Consolidated Pioneer Mortg.)*, 178 B.R. 222, 226 (9th Cir. B.A.P.
2 1995), *aff'd*, 91 F.3d 151 (9th Cir. 1996).

3 **IV. THE OBJECTION**

4 The Palm Harbor Loan appears to have been a legitimate, arms-length transaction
5 with a third party borrower. In addition, the Direct Lenders took a known risk by
6 investing in a promissory note secured by a lien on real property.

7 USACM is not liable for the Borrower's default or any decrease in the value of the
8 collateral.

9 The Direct Lenders fail to state a claim because USACM does not appear to have
10 breached the loan servicing agreements with respect to collection of the Palm Harbor
11 Loan. USACM was under no duty to foreclose on the collateral securing the Palm Harbor
12 Loan or take any other action.

13 This objection will not affect the Direct Lenders' right to be repaid on the Palm
14 Harbor Loan by the Borrower, to recover from the sale of any collateral that secured the
15 Palm Harbor Loan or share in any funds generated by enforcing the guaranty associated
16 with the Palm Harbor Loan.

17 **V. CONCLUSION**

18 The USACM Trust respectfully requests that the Court disallow the claims against
19 USACM listed in Exhibit A in full because those claims are based entirely upon an
20 investment in the Palm Harbor Loan. This objection concerns only the Palm Harbor Loan
21 and not any other claims of any of the Direct Lenders. This objection will not affect the
22 Direct Lenders rights arising out of the Palm Harbor promissory note and deed of trust.
23 The USACM Trust also requests such other and further relief as is just and proper.

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1 DATED this 10th day of July, 2011.
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LEWIS AND ROCA LLP
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8 Copy of the foregoing and pertinent
9 portion of Exhibits mailed by first
10 class postage prepaid U.S. Mail on
July 11, 2011 to all parties listed on
Exhibit A attached.

11 LEWIS AND ROCA LLP
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13 s/ Matt Burns
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